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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 002136

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DEPARTMENT FOR S/I AND NEA/I

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [IZ](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPANESE VIEWS OF IRAQ COMPACT AND NEIGHBORS  
MEETING

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Joe Donovan for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: Japan is hopeful the good turnout at the International Compact with Iraq (ICI) and Iraq Neighbors meetings May 3-4 in Sharm el-Sheikh will lead to greater international support for Iraq that will translate into improved security conditions, according to National Security Advisor Koike and MOFA contacts. In addition, Tokyo views as positive commitments made by Saudi Arabia and China with regard to debt relief and, in China's case, the extension of grant aid. On a more negative note, the Japanese were taken aback by suggestions that the United States was disappointed by Japan's failure to announce additional commitments, particularly given the fact the Iraqis have yet spend what the Japanese consider to be very generous contributions made to date. END SUMMARY.

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IRAQ COMPACT MEETING  
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12. (C) Japan's delegation to the May 3 International Compact with Iraq (ICI) meeting was led by the Prime Minister's Advisor for National Security Yoriko Koike and Ambassador in Charge of Iraq Reconstruction Gotaro Ogawa. Both were pleased with the outcome of the meeting, Koike told Charge on May 10. It was good, she said, to have so many countries present to support Iraq. Even though some may utilize different methods to show support, all appear to be working in the same direction. In a separate readout, MOFA Second Middle East Division Principal Deputy Director Motosada Matano told an Embassy Tokyo Political Officer that Japan was particularly pleased with the turnout and by the fact that Saudi Arabia expressed an interest in granting debt relief. Similarly, debt relief and grant aid offers by China were seen to be a positive development. The fact that additional countries are making commitments is good for Iraq, Matano said, and it is Japan's hope that any positive momentum generated by the meeting will translate into improved security conditions inside Iraq.

13. (C) The Japanese delegation and MOFA were taken aback, said Matano, by remarks to Ogawa during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines suggesting senior U.S. officials were "disappointed" with Japan for its failure to announce new commitments of assistance. (NOTE: Koike did not specifically mention this to Charge, but did observe that the meeting had turned into a type of "competition" to see who could announce the most support. END NOTE.) Matano explained that Japan is

extremely proud of the fact it is the second largest contributor to Iraqi reconstruction and that its support for Iraq has remained firm at a time when other countries are withdrawing forces and showing signs of weakening commitment.

He pointed out that Iraq has been unable to fully utilize the commitments Japan has made and that it is Tokyo's policy to exhaust all existing commitments before making new ones. Koike's remarks at the ICI meeting, delivered in Arabic, recounted the assistance Japan has extended to Iraq so far, but did not announce new offers.

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NEIGHBORS MEETING  
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14. (U) Foreign Minister Aso arrived in Sharm el-Sheikh on May 4 to represent Japan at the Iraq Neighbors meeting. In his remarks, Aso reiterated Japan's strong support for Prime Minister Maliki and Tokyo's expectation that Maliki's efforts will achieve the early restoration of public security. He recapped the assistance Japan has made available to Iraq, and called on Syria and Iran to play a constructive role in stabilizing the situation in Iraq. Aso referred back to the International Compact, calling it a comprehensive plan covering the areas of politics, security, and economics that must be steadily implemented under the responsibility and leadership of the Government of Iraq, and pledged that Japan will spare no effort to support the efforts of the government of Iraq to do so.

15. (C) Iraqi Foreign Minister Zebari met separately with Aso, briefing him on efforts being made to improve the situation in Iraq and told him the next few months will hold the key to Iraq's future, said Matano. Aso concurred that the coming

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months are critical, and reaffirmed Japan's support for Iraq and the Maliki government.

16. (C) Koike commented to Charge on the atmospherics of the dinner, observing that the Egyptians, out of deference to the Iranian delegation, did not offer alcoholic beverages (although adequate quantities were available behind the stage to those who sought them out.) The gesture turned out to be for naught, as Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki refused to attend anyway, using as a pretext the fact that the violinist hired to provide musical entertainment was wearing a dress that revealed too much of her arms, Koike said.

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COMMENT  
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17. (C) The Japanese remain committed to the long term success of Iraq and have pledged and made generous contributions to date, second in amount only to the United States. Unfortunately, Iraq still lacks the capacity to absorb the funds Japan has made available. On the military side, Japan has deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom members of both its ground and air self defense forces, and is in the process of extending the deployment of the air units despite increasing opposition and heated political debate in the Diet.  
DONOVAN